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SUBJECT: ANGOLAN PRESS COVERS OBAMA MIDDLE EAST OUTREACH SPEECH A
NEW BEGINNING'

11. Summary: Angolan media extensively covered President Obama's June 4, 2009 Cairo speech entitled "A New Beginning." The headlines generally focused on the reconciliatory tone of his comments and the sincerity of his desire to reach out to the Middle East and Muslims around the world. A round up of the coverage from June 4 until June 7 follows. All coverage was in Portuguese. End Summary.

12. Thursday June 4th coverage

ANGOP, (www.portalangop.co.ao) the largest Angolan internet news outlet widely read by Angolans outside of Angola, covered the speech extensively. ANGOP quoted White House advisor David Axelrod, who stated that "rupture between Muslims and US is undeniable" and that Obama will repair the damage.

Radio Nacional, the government's nationwide radio network with approximately 14 million regular listeners and the only source of media that reaches rural areas, covered the speech on its 8:00 p.m. news program. A recorded segment of the speech was followed by an interview with David Ja, the leader of the Muslim Community in Angola, who said "Obama is God's envoy to bring peace to the World." Ja was positive about Obama saying he will be able to reach out to Muslims and reconcile with the Muslim world.

On its 9:00 p.m.-10:30 p.m. news program Radio Mais, a small, new radio station that reaches an urban population centered in the capital city of Luanda, played a live feed from BBC Africa's Portuguese Service. Listeners wrote in by cell phone text message to engage on the following question, "Do you believe Obama's speech will be able to reconcile the US with Muslims?" An announcer read about 15 of the responses received from Lusophone Africa including from Mozambique, "I believe Obama has changed the perception of the US not only for Muslims but for the whole world." From Cape Verde, "I believe the Muslim world will work with Obama to fight terrorism worldwide," and from Angola, "I believe the world will be more peaceful with Obama and that the Muslim world will have to reconcile not only with the US but also with the European Union."

Jornal de Angola, the country's only daily newspaper with an approximate circulation of 27,000, announced the President's Egypt visit and speech on a sidebar. The state run newspaper ran a story most likely from an international news service on the visit and about President Obama's desire to reach out to Muslims.

Angolan State Television (TPA) on their 8:30 p.m. and 11:00 p.m. news show announced the speech in Cairo and noted that it signified a new relationship with Muslim world

RTP Africa and RTP International, which are Portuguese TV news channels that have Angola feeds, rebroadcasted the speech dubbed in Portuguese several hours after its conclusion.

13. Friday June 5th coverage

During its 7:00 am news broadcast, Radio Ecclesia, the Catholic Church's radio network broadcast in Luanda, covered the speech and emphasized the historic nature of the President's outreach to the Muslim world.

The ANGOP internet site on Friday ran a six-paragraph article about the speech, noting that Obama supported Palestinian aspirations for an independent state. The article said, "Obama mentioned in his

speech the suffering of the Jewish people for centuries and during the Holocaust. He said that denying the Holocaust is a sign of ignorance and hatred." ANGOP noted the President's "conciliatory remarks" regarding the Arab-Palestinian conflict and observes that, "The US will not turn its back on the legitimate aspirations of Palestinians for dignity and opportunity in a state of their own."

On Friday, Jornal de Angola ran the headline, "Coexistence of Palestinian and Israeli states: Obama points out solution for Middle East" appeared on the front page, below-the fold. An opinion piece by Omar el Sadr, Egyptian opinion columnist who is syndicated to Jornal de Angola, followed on page seven. The opinion article was titled, "Obama opens the door for hope" and it conveyed a positive tone about the US outreach to Muslims. El Sadr wrote that the President touched all the subjects that matter to Muslims in his speech and that, although he left no certainties, he promised to work to help solve the problems of the Middle East. El Sadr said the speech was a clear attempt to change the image that Muslims have of the US. El Sadr also noted that The President considers a small minority of Extremists largely responsible for the mistrust of the US in its relations with the Muslim world and the negative way the US is viewed by Muslims today.

Jornal de Angola also carried a story on page eight, under the headline, "Obama proposes solution of two states for peace between Israelis and Palestinians."

Radio LAC, an independent radio station tied to the ruling party that broadcasts to the capital city, ran, on its 7:00 a.m. news show an announcement about Obama's speech in Cairo as an effort at reconciliation. The radio station interviewed Dr. Mario Pinto de Andrade, the President of a local private university and one of Angola's US policy experts, who said that Obama is implementing the agenda that he promised during his campaign. He said that this approach may not accomplish everything right away, but that Muslims will see the US differently because of the effort. The interview had a very positive tone.

14. Saturday, June 6th coverage

Radio Nacional: A three-hour morning live panel discussion with five panelists from government, civil society, and business including US Ambassador Dan Mozena, focused on US-Angola bilateral relations. Discussion touched the Cairo speech briefly. Small segments of the discussion concentrating on the Ambassador's comments but not related to the Obama speech were rebroadcast during subsequent news hours throughout the weekend.

15. Monday, June 8th coverage

Jornal de Angola carried an opinion piece by a member of parliament Joao Melo who spoke favorably of the President's strategy of engaging with the Middle East and took issue with those who say President Obama's strategy demonstrates weakness. Melo says the sentiment of the Cairo speech indicates a step in the right direction.

16. Comment: Coverage surrounding the speech was positive and generally praised the President for engaging with the Middle East and Muslims in a different way. The reporting indicated that Angolans recognize the importance of this policy change.

HAWKINS